

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Little Harbor Window Company Inc.

#### Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership

#### Opening the Window to Process Improvements

##### Client Profile:

Little Harbor Window Company, Inc., in business since 1983, is a manufacturer of custom mahogany doors and windows. The company offers the architect, builder and homeowner the ability to custom design their windows and doors to perfectly fit the specifications of the particular building. Little Harbor's customization allows for historical requirements, extreme weather conditions, or enhancing the design of homes. Little Harbor employs 38 people at its facility in Berwick, Maine.

##### Situation:

Little Harbor Windows approached the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Maine MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, in search of methodologies to assist with employee training in Lean Manufacturing fundamentals, current and future state continuous improvement practices, and in planning improvement and sustainment activities.

##### Solution:

Maine MEP project managers performed a business assessment which provided a report that indicated strengths and weaknesses. This led to a Lean pilot program training funded by a U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration grant. Little Harbor employees participated in several Lean manufacturing and Value Stream Mapping programs. An internal Lean champion was identified and a plan established to perform improvement events on a periodic basis throughout the facility. This included two Value Stream Maps (VSM) focused on the manufacturing processes and two Kaizen events focused on the engineering paperwork and a 5S event in the loading dock area.

##### Results:

- \* Increased sales by \$300,000.
- \* Retained sales of \$300,000.
- \* Realized \$35,000 in cost savings.
- \* Achieved 50 percent reduction in rework.
- \* Achieved reduced lead time and changeover time.

##### Testimonial:

"MEP gave us the tools we needed to be able to review, plan and implement all of these ideas. I would enthusiastically encourage any and all companies to engage MEP to broaden the views of the key players so that they can create an environment that embraces change and improvement which will lead to increased productivity and ultimately to retaining jobs. As the capacity of the company increases so does the possibility of creating new jobs. I have watched other businesses, some larger than mine - some smaller, try to make these changes on their own and I have never seen any of them

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enjoy the positive results we have seen with the help of MEP."

James Eaton, President